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Japan

Solid Wood Products

March Housing Market Update

2002

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Report Highlights: Housing starts in Japan declined 4.6% from previous year to 1,173,858 units in 2001, and for the first quarter of 2002, housing starts were 258,836, down 0.3% from the same period last year, as a result of Japan's continued economic problems. Wood-frame constructions was 44.5% of the total starts and 52.1% of total floor space constructed in 2001, both down from the previous year.

Includes PSD changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Tokyo [JA1], JA

Housing starts in Japan declined 4.6% from previous year to 1,173,858 units in 2001, and for the first quarter of 2002, housing starts were 258,836, down 0.3% from the same period last year, as a result of Japan's continued economic problems.

As of March, 2002, housing starts were 88,865 for a seasonally adjusted 1,111,000 units for 2002. Prefabricated housing starts were 10,470, down 11.1% from a year earlier. The 2 x 4 platform and wood framed housing starts were 5,582, down 5.8% for the same period a year earlier. The wood-framing share of all housing starts through March 2002 was 39,190, or about 44.1%, down 8.8% from the same period the previous year.

With the exception of rental housing, starts of all types of housing declined in 2001, from the previous year. Rental housing starts, however, increased every month for the last 6 months of 2001 to 38,377. Construction of custom houses, a critical sector for wood use, continued down with double-digit declines. Prefabricated housing starts were 15,275, declining for the last 8 months of the year.

The combined floor space of all housing starts in 2001 was 109,837,000 square meters, down 8.4% from the previous year. The wood-framed share of the total floor space of all starts was 57,282,000 square meters, 52.1% of the total floor space of housing starts, down 11.2% from the previous year, reflecting a continuing downtrend in the average size of a new homes, including wood homes.

Japanese Housing Starts (Units)				
Time Frame	2001	% Change (01/00)	Jan.-Mar. 2002	% Change (02/01)
Total Starts	1,173,858	- 4.6	258,836	- 0.3
-Custom House	386,814	- 14.3	80,694	- 10.9
-Rental House	438,123	+ 4.0	91,682	+ 4.6
-Corporate	9,767	- 16.5	2,416	+ 7.6
-Built-for-sale	338,965	- 1.8	84,044	+ 6.1
Wood-Framed	522,823	- 5.9	107,680	- 7.4
Wood Share (%)	44.5 %	- 0.7 points	41.6 %	- 3.2 points
By Framing Method (Units)				
-Condominiums	215,301	- 1.1	57,386	+ 15.0
-Prefab. House (Wood-Framed)	165,257 (27,186)	- 5.6 (-10.4)	34,854 (5,699)	-7.0 (-15.1)

-2 x 4 Wooden	77,235	- 2.4	15,938	- 2.4
By Floor Space (1,000 square meters)				
All starts	109,837	- 8.4	24,022	- 4.2
Wood-Framed	57,282	- 11.2	11,912	- 8.3
Wood Share(%)	52.1 %	- 1.7 points	49.6 %	- 2.2 points

(Source : Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport)

End of report.